NEW 144 PAGE BATMAN STORY BY BATMAN MOVIE WRITER, SAM HAMM, & DENYS COWAN ✻ ELEKTRA SAGA TPB DUE IN '89 ✻ METAL MEN RETURN ✻ NEW MOON KNIGHT SERIES PLANNED ✻ DENYS COWAN INTERVIEW

66 COMIC SHOP NEWS™

From

A Comics Specialty Outlet

THE WEEKLY COMICS NEWSLETTER!

Grendel Gets New Art Team, New Direction

by Cliff Biggers

Comico's extremely popular and critically acclaimed series ***Grendel*** will get a new art team and move in a new direction beginning with ***Grendel #24***, on sale in October. That's when the art team of John K. Snyder and Jay Geldhof, joined by color artist Joe Matt, take over the task of visually interpreting Matt Wagner's latest ***Grendel*** storyline. ***Grendel*** is a unique comic book that "explores the fruits of aggression and its effects on those it touches." In the ***Grendel*** series, Grendel is not one character but a line of character utilizing the Grendel name and mask. The comic has been extremely popular, and both a graphic album and a trade paperback have been published by Comico. Grendel was also nominated for four 1988 Eisner Awards. Bob Schreck, Administrative Director of Comico, said, "I am going on the record here and predicting that the popularity of ***Grendel*** is going to skyrocket once everyone gets a look at what Matt and the crew have accomplished with these new issues!" The art team is unique; John K. Snyder is previously known for his "Fashion in Action" work and ***The Prowler***, both from Eclipse. Geldhof has previously illustrated ***Bob Mercenary*** for Fantagraphics and did the inks on the first twelve issues of ***Grendel***. However, rather than functioning as a standard penciller-inker team, Snyder and Geldhof will be alternating art chores in a very unusual manner. For two consecutive issues, Snyder pencils and Geldhof inks; every third issue, Geldhof pencils and Snyder inks. Completing the team is Joe Matt, the color artist. Matt is a studio mate of Matt Wagner, the writer/creator of ***Grendel***. He has had illustrations in earlier issues of ***Grendel, Strip Aids***, and ***The Jam Color Special***, and has been the regular colorist on ***Grendel*** since June 1988. "Matt's plan of changing story direction and art teams has certainly proven to be quite a successful way of keeping everyone's level of enthusiasm running at full steam," Schreck said. "He works extremely well under pressure and loves a challenge. Right now, he's so charged up by what these guys are handing in that his storytelling is leaping off the computer screen. This all translates into one great comic book experience!" Matt Wagner said, "This story really starts off with a bang, and just continues to expand into 'epic' proportions. The end of this storyline will result in a major effect on Grendel's power in, and influence on, the world." In the new storyline, Pope Innocent XLII and Orion Assante are positioning themselves for a major power struggle. The new Grendel enters the fray, and becomes the unknown factor. In the midst of these tensions, Pope Innocent XLII reinstates the Second Inquisition, leading Orion Assante to make his move--and Grendel has plans, too. ***Grendel #24*** will be on sale in early October, and the ten-issue storyline will continue on a monthly basis thereafter. Each issue will be priced at $1.75.

Art ©1988 Matt Wagner/Comico

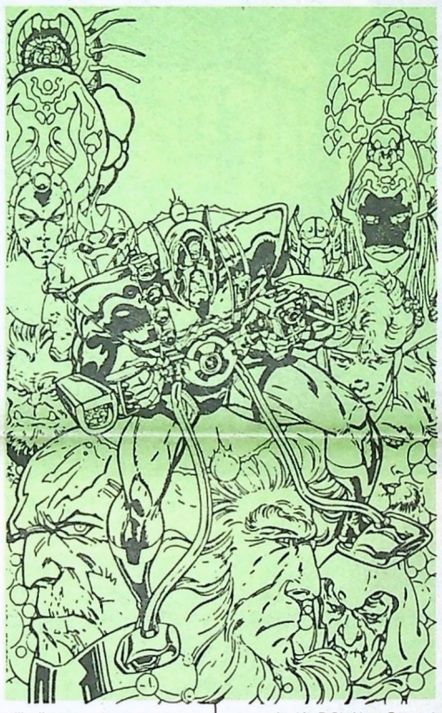
Cosmic Odyssey Leads to Genesis of *New Gods*

by Cliff Biggers

"When the Old Gods died--there arose the ***New Gods***!" And now, years after the ***New Gods*** series died the first time, there will arise an all-new ***New Gods*** series, continuing from the events presented in ***Cosmic Odyssey #4***.

Jack Kirby created the ***New Gods*** for DC in 1971; the series contained many of the elements of cosmic adventure found in much of Kirby's work for Marvel. More recently, Orion and the other New Gods have been an integral part of the ***Cosmic Odyssey*** storyline Jim Starlin and Mike Mignola are presenting in the four-issue prestige-format mini-series.

The first issue of ***New Gods*** will appear the very same day that ***Cosmic Odyssey #4*** arrives in comics shops, according to DC. This will allow readers who have become familiar with the ***New Gods*** through the limited series to follow those adventures directly into the first issue of the new ongoing series.



The writer of the ***New Gods*** series is Jim Starlin, who also is the writer on ***Cosmic Odyssey***. Starlin has become famous for the sort of epic storylines that will be a part of ***New Gods***. Joining him as artist on the series is Paris Cullins, who recently illustrated the ***Forever People*** mini-series that was also inspired by a Jack Kirby series.

The first issue of ***New Gods*** picks up after the destruction of the *Anti-Life Aspect* from ***Cosmic Odyssey***. The victory wasn't achieved without cost, though--many lives were lost. Orion of New Genesis feels it his duty to deliver one war casualty home--to his enemies.

New Gods #1 is set to debut on November 17th; each issue will be presented in DC's New Format, priced at $1.50.

Art from *New Gods #1*
©1988 DC Comics

Black Orchid Blossoms at DC

by Cliff Biggers

Just who is the Black Orchid? That's a question that no one has answered--until now.

The mysterious Black Orchid always had an uncanny ability to show up in the nick of time--but no one knew how she made her appearance, where she came from, or where she went after the action was over. No one knew anything about the Black Orchid, in fact--she has remained one of DC's most mysterious and enigmatic characters. A little of that mystery will be unveiled in a new prestige-format ***Black Orchid*** limited series, set to begin in early November. In the new series, written by Neil Gaiman and fully painted by David McKean, comics fans will not only learn some of the background of the Black Orchid, but they will also have a chance to see her in action with numerous members of the DC universe, including Batman, Poison Ivy, Lex Luthor, and the Swamp Thing. ***The Black Orchid*** is a difficult series to preview; Dave McKean, the artist of the series, has painted every single panel of the comic book, making it one of the most stunning series to appear in the prestige format. McKean's expertise as a painter has already been seen on the covers for ***Hellblazer*** and recent issues of ***Swamp Thing***.

Writer Neil Gaiman is new to DC, but his name is familiar to fans of ***Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy***; Gaiman wrote ***Don't Panic: The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy Companion***. He also wrote the ***Violent Cases*** graphic novel published in England last year--a graphic novel that united Gaiman and McKean, in fact! Comics shops will have full-color previews of ***Black Orchid*** in October--and once you see it, you'll see just why this is the DC prestige-series of the fall. Each 48-page issue will be priced at $3.50.

Art ©1988 DC Comics

Watercolor Adds to *Rust* in New Series

by Alex Kirkland

Rust is one of NOW Comics' oldest titles, and that has been a problem; as NOW titles became increasingly popular, ***Rust*** was left behind because new readers weren't sure that they could get involved with the book's continuity. NOW will solved the problem in October, when it re-launches ***Rust*** as an all-new fully-watercolored title featuring artwork by Vincent Locke.

"I knew the book was in need of a different look after ***Rust #13*** (during which the world was almost completely wiped out by plague). When I saw Vincent's work, I knew he was born for ***Rust***," Tony Caputo, NOW Comics Publisher, said.

Locke isn't a newcomer to comics; he is the creator, artist, writer of ***Deadworld***, having done nine issues of that title. The art for ***Rust*** will be quite different from the art for ***Deadworld***, however; it will be fully watercolored in Locke's unique and captivating style. The appearance of the book will be similar to other painted works, such as ***Elektra: Assassin, Moonshadow, Blood***, and the upcoming ***Havok and Wolverine*** title. The emphasis of ***Rust*** will change as the series starts anew. In its first run, ***Rust*** dealt with the story of Scott Baker, an outcast due to his hideous physical appearance. In the new series, the story will emphasize Scott Baker's role as a man driven to the aid of mankind. In the post-plague world of ***Rust***, society has become aloof, impersonal, and sterile, run by the greedy and power-hungry.

"The changes in ***Rust*** are going to be startling," Caputo said. "Until now, the book has been overlooked because it wasn't the kind of comic book avid comics fans read, but wit the new changes, ***Rust*** will be a stunning comic. You can be sure there will be no sacrificing involved. ***Rust*** will remain the raw and devastating book it has always been."

In preparation for the transition, NOW will not publish an issue of ***Rust*** in September; Caputo feels confident that everyone will be so pleased with the new ***Rust*** come October that they won't mind the wait.

Rust ©1988 NOW Comics

NEWSBRIEFS

BATMAN HAMMS IT UP IN 3-PART SERIES

An upcoming **Batman** 3-part 144-page extravaganza set to appear in ***Detective Comics*** will be written by ***Batman*** film scriptwriter **Sam Hamm** and illustrated by **Denys Cowan** and **Dick Giordano**. The story, set to debut in late spring or early summer, will open with a 60-page installment, follow that up with a 24-page second part, and end with another 60-page extravaganza. **Denys Cowan**, the extremely popular artist of ***The Question, The Black Panther***, and ***Dr. Zero***, has infrequently illustrated Batman in the past, but this series will be his first return to the character's solo adventures in a while. As always, look to ***CSN*** for more news on this as it becomes available.

MY WAR AND WELCOME TO IT

Chris Warner's ***Black Cross***, a **Dark Horse** favorite since his appearance in ***Dark Horse Presents #1***, will return in 1989 in his own three-issue forty-page squarebound series ***Black Cross: My War***. The series will chronicle the adventures of Black Cross, a man who crosses into the lawless black zones in a post-apocalyptic future. Each issue will feature painted wraparound covers and a full color "pullout" poster. ***CSN*** will bring you more information on scheduling and price when it becomes available.

DC PLANS COLORFUL NEW SERIES

The Blue and the Gold is the title of a new series in the planning stages from **DC**; **Dan Jurgens** will be involved in the new series that will feature **Blue Beetle** and **Booster Gold** in a title together. Booster Gold is Jurgens' own creation; the character appeared in his own series for 24 issues, and now appears in ***Justice League International***.

In that title, Booster Gold and the Blue Beetle are good friends, so "I think a book co-starring the two of them is a natural. It's going to have that unique JLI flavor to it," Jurgens said.

ROY ROGERS SERIAL TRIGGERS NEW PHOTO ALBUM

AC Comics has scheduled several Western comics in the past few months, but their venture into things western goes beyond comics when AC releases ***The Roy Rogers Trail of Robin Hood Photo Album*** in late September or early October.

Trail of Robin Hood was a serial that brought together nine Western leading men in one Adventure: **Rocky Lane, Monte Hale, Crash Corrigan, Rex Allen, Tom Tyler, William Farnum, Kermit Maynard, Tom Keene**, and even vab guy **George Cheeseboro**. This photo album will feature cast and production credits, a storyline synopsis, over 20 full page photos, including some rare behind-the-cameras scenes, a reproduction of the 1-sheet and half-sheet posters on heavy stock, and full-color reproduction of all 8 lobby cards.

Roy Rogers Trail of Robin Hood Photo Album will be priced at $11.95.

"PRESENTING THE BILL"
-KELLY FREAS-

Presenting the Bill ©1988 Kelly Freas

STABUR GOES MAD FOR FREAS

Kelly Freas has established himself as a cover artist for paperbacks, having done literally hundreds of covers for paperbacks from Ace, DAW, Laser, and others; in addition, he was the primarily illustrator for ***Analog*** magazine for many years. He was also an illustrator for ***Mad Magazine*** for a while, having done numerous paintings for them. Now **Stabur Graphics** is offering a 24" x 25" six-color limited edition print of one of Kelly Freas' best works for ***Mad***, **"Presenting the Bill."**

The painting, a satire of the **"Great Moments In Medicine"** advertising series, illustrates that most unforgettable of all medicine-related moments: when you have to pay for it! The high-quality signed and numbered print is limited to only 395 copies, and is priced at $75.

If you want a copy of this lithograph, be sure to let your comics shop know as soon as possible, since availability is very limited.

MOON KNIGHT RESUMES REGULAR ORBIT ON MARVEL SCHEDULE

Moon Knight, currently seen in ***West Coast Avengers***, will be returning to his own regular title in 1989; the new book will be written by **Chuck Dixon**, but no artist has been named for the new book yet. Keep an eye on future issues of ***CSN*** for more information!

TANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

Remember the **Haunted Tank?** The lead series of the now-defunct ***GI Combat*** hasn't been around for a while, but the Haunted Tank makes a reappearance in ***Sgt. Rock Special #2***, which reprints the all-star war story from ***Brave and Bold #52***. In the **Bob Kanigher/Joe Kubert** classic, **Sgt. Rock, the Haunted Tank, Johnny Cloud**, and **Mlle. Marie** come together in a full-length war story.

Walt Simonson contributes a classic battle story as a backup feature for the special, which is scheduled to hit comics shops on October 20th.

WERTHAM'S NIGHTMARE...

Eternity has already announced its ***Spicy Tales*** series of 40's and 50's stories at their most lurid; now Eternity has a new project that might be described as Frederick Wertham's comics nightmare. Wertham, as you recall, devoted a large portion of his ***Seduction of the Innocent*** to a discussion of the graphic horror in comics of his era. Now Eternity is gathering some of the best pre-code terror stories of the sort that Wertham found objectionable into a new anthology title, 50's Terror.

The first issue of the monthly series will be available in October, and will contain five stories: "The Rift of the Maggis," "Kiss and Kill," "I'll String Along," "The Undertaker," and "Eye Eye, Sir."

VIETNAM JOURNAL READIES FOR GRAPHIC ALBUM DEBUT

Apple Comics' highly-praised ***Vietnam Journal*** will debut in graphic album format in early 1989, when a collection of the first several issues of that best-selling title will appear in one volume. The graphic album will also feature an original **Don Lomax** cover. According to **Mike Catron**, publisher of Apple Comics, once the graphic album is published, Apple will cease to keep the original issues in print.

ELECTION RESULTS DELAYED

The results of the Hub City elections, set to be revealed in ***Question #24***, will be delayed a month--because ***Question #24*** has been delayed a month. It's now scheduled to reach comics shops on November 3rd. Also, **Denys Cowan's** superb pencils on ***The Question*** will be embellished by a new inker; **Malcolm Jones** has come in to relieve Rick Magyar as inker on the series--and wait until you see the combination!

CAPTAIN THUNDER BOLTS INTO TRADE PAPERBACK

This November, **Hero Comics** will offer the first three issues of **Roy & Dann Thomas's** ***Captain Thunder and Blue Bolt*** in one trade paperback volume. Illustrated by **Dell Barras and E.R. Cruz**, ***Captain Thunder and Blue Bolt*** tells the story of a son in search of the superhero father he has been separated from for far too long--and once he finds him, the fun begins. The 84-page full-color graphic album will be priced at $9.95.

GANGBUSTER COMES ON LIKE GANGBUSTERS IN SUPERMAN BOOKS

The Gangbuster, the mysterious vigilante hero who has made his return in the pages of ***Adventures of Superman***, will become a focus character in ***Superman #27***, on sale November 24th, and ***Adventures of Superman #450***, on sale December 1st. The Guardian and the Gangbuster will have a major confrontation during which the Guardian will rip open the Gangbuster's costume--revealing his true origin. Meanwhile, everyone's favorite **Man of Steel** is having his own problems, as he has to deal with his own alien nature while battling aliens who seek to take over Earth. Finally, a guilt-ridden Superman decides it's time to say happy trails to Earth and head off to another world. Don't miss it all, brought to you by **Roger Stern, Kerry Gammill, and Brett Breeding** (in ***Superman***) and **Jerry Ordway** (in ***Adventures of Superman***). You'll hate being left out of this one!

DARK HORSE GEARS UP FOR GEARY COLLECTION

Rick Geary, acclaimed cartoonist who is a regular contributor to ***Dark Horse Presents***, will be the subject of a new 40-page **Dark Horse** collection scheduled for late this year or early next year. The book will feature some of Geary's best work, including the **Now It Can Be Told** and **Excursions** series. Keep checking ***CSN*** for more information!

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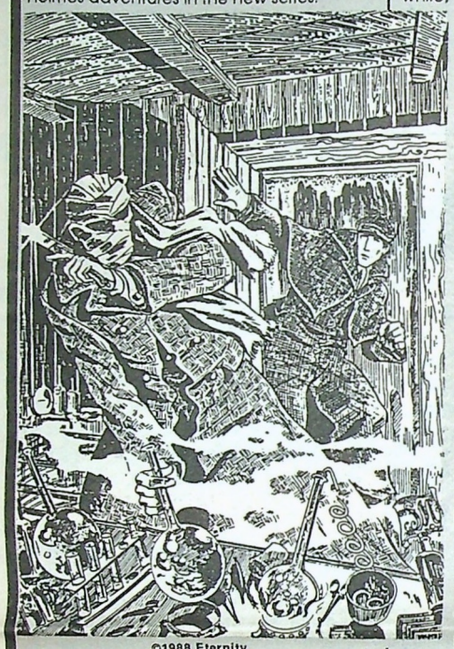
NEWSBRIEFS

ETERNITY BRINGS MYSTERY FROM UNDER WRAPS

Sherlock Holmes fans have been thrilled with **Eternity's** recent ***Scarlet in Gaslight*** mini-series, which is being collected into an Eternity graphic novel. Holmes fans will be doubly pleased to learn that a sequel to ***Scarlet in Gaslight*** will begin in December, when Eternity unveils ***A Case of Blind Fear***, a four-issue limited series that pits Holmes against the Invisible Man. Writer **Martin Powell** and artist **Seppo Makinen** will continue their Holmes adventures in the new series.



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A fruit vendor reports an apple hanging in mid-air like a balloon; a thief gives a horrified account of a ghostly apparition with its internal organs visible; London chemists report the theft of large quantities of obscure drugs. Sherlock Holmes is called in to find the meaning behind these seemingly unrelated occurrences--and finds himself caught up in the case of the **Invisible Man**. "It's Holmes' most deadly case yet," writer Martin Powell said. "The Invisible Man is a creature of science, not magic. This makes the case a natural for Holmes' powers of deduction." "***Scarlet in Gaslight*** was one of the most successful books we've ever published," Eternity Publisher **Dave Olbrich** said. "Each issue has sold out, and there was a high level of interest outside the comics community. We anticipate an even greater response to ***A Case of Blind Fear***."

METAL MEN STEEL THEMSELVES FOR RETURN TO COMICS

Some of **DC's** quirkiest heroes of all time, ***The Metal Men***, will be making a return to comics sometime in 1989, courtesy of **Mike Carlin and Dan Jurgens**. In Direct Currents, Jurgens says "The original ***Metal Men*** series of the 1960's was a great book and that group was one of the few things in comics that I've always wanted to do. Comics being the neat place that it is, I'm finally getting the chance." No firm release date has been set for Doc Magnus' amazing robots' return to comics, but Jurgens says that the first issue is already completed.

GOLDEN HELMET GLITTERS ON GLADSTONE SCHEDULE

Disney Album 13, scheduled to make its comics-shop debut October 27th, will feature one of **Carl Barks'** most famous stories, **"The Golden Helmet."** This full-length adventure story has all the Barks trademarks--adventure, exotic locales, and a touch of history--and is one of the most-requested Barks stories that **Gladstone** has yet to release. The graphic album will also offer two more Barks stories and a Barks cover.

ELEKTRA TRIES NEW TPB ON FOR SAIS

Readers of ***Comic Shop News*** can be pleased with themselves: **Marvel** has taken their suggestions to heart, and they've announced that 1989 will herald the trade paperback release of the 4-issue ***Elektra Saga*** series, which presented the entire Elektra storyline from the pages of **Frank Miller's** ***Daredevil***, re-edited into a four-issue deluxe series in 1983. The four-issue series has been relatively hard to find for quite a while, and when ***CSN*** conducted its readers' poll to find out just what you wanted to see in TPB, this series was one of the top vote-getters. Now it's on schedule for the first half of next year as a single-volume trade paperback.

TEEN TITANS JOIN BATMAN TO WRAP UP BEST OF B&B

The final issue of the six-issue limited series ***The Best of the Brave and Bold*** will reprint the **Bob Haney/Neal Adams** story from ***Brave and Bold #83*** that teamed up **Batman** and the **Teen Titans**. The Teen Titans featured in this team-up are the old Teen Titans, pre-Wolfman-and-Perez-vintage, but they do include Titans familiars Robin, Wonder Girl, and Speedy. The backup stories in this issue will feature The Viking Prince by **Haney** and **Kubert** in two tales reprinted from ***B&B #8*** and ***#9***, and Robin Hood by **Kanigher and Heath** in a tale from ***B&B #11***. Look for ***Best of the Brave and Bold #6*** in comics shops on November 17th.

PUNISHER PREPARES TO BOWL OVER KINGPIN

For a guy like the **Punisher**, the ability of the **Kingpin** to elude punishment must be pretty aggravating--maybe that's why the Punisher is making the Kingpin his target in a four-part story that will run through ***Punisher #15-#18***. In the early installments, the Punisher gathers his elite group of fighters to prepare for his attack on the Kingpin; by the seventeenth issue, though, the elite squad has been defeated, and it looks like the Punisher will have to attack the Kingpin in his skyscraper headquarters alone. **Mike Baron** and **While Portacio** bring you all the action beginning in mid-September and running through the end of the year.

Meanwhile, in ***Punisher's War Journal #4***, the Punisher faces Sniper, a new villain who triggers Punisher's Viet Nam memories. **Carl Potts** and **Jim Lee** bring Punisher fans this story on November 17th--quite a red-letter day for Punisher fans, with both of his regular titles debuting on the same day!

CADAVERA BEGINS NEW UNDERTAKING IN MR. MONSTER

Mr. Monster #4, too long delayed, will make its appearance this November--and Mr. Monster will also have a special guest star for a backup feature when **Cadavera** debuts. The new backup feature is written and illustrated by **Mike McCarthy**, who will also be working on Apple's ***Blood of Dracula*** in the near future, and will match the offbeat horror and humor that appears in **Michael T. Gilbert's** Mr. Monster lead feature.

Meanwhile, in the Mr. Monster story, the origin of Mr. Monster continues as Strongfort Stearn is menaced by a band of bloodthirsty vampires, forcing his father, the Mr. Monster of the 40's, to come out of retirement to defend the family honor--not to mention the family heir!

COMICO GOES TROLLING FOR FUN

Comico will team with Scott Beaderstadt and Paul Fricke to help put the "fun" back in "funnybooks" this November, when ***Trollords #1*** debuts as a regular feature in the Comico line-up.

Trollords began as a black-and-white title in the black-and-white boom period of 1986; it became very popular right away because of the likable trio of Trolls, Harry, Larry, and Jerry--a Three-Stooges-like bunch of trolls who manage to move from one misadventure to another. The Trollords were created, written, and illustrated by the team of **Scott Beaderstadt** and **Paul Fricke**.

Unlike most of the comics in the black-and-white boom period, ***Trollords*** survived and continued to do well when the black-and-white bust came a little later. Finally, the comic was ready to move from black and white to full color, and Comico became the publisher of the book.

The first Comico issue will feature a disenchanted would-be author who is contemplating ending his career--and his life! Harry, Larry, and Jerry come into the picture to try to stop the untimely end of a promising career--and a promising life.

The new ***Trollords*** comic will be published on a bi-monthly schedule from Comico; each issue will be written and illustrated by Beaderstadt and Fricke with **Len Strazewski**, and colored by Ray Murtaugh. The first issue, priced at $1.75, should appear in comics shops in the first week of November.

MARVEL DIGS DINO-RIDERS

Dino-Riders, one of the three series that will be a part of the ***Marvel Action Universe*** animated series debuting this fall across the nation, will appear in comics October 27th, when **George Caragonne** and **Kelley Jones** bring fans the first issue of the new monthly title.

Dino-Riders focuses on a group of characters who possess psychic abilities which enable them to control their dinosaur allies. According to Marvel, the flavor of the book will be much more notably "superhero" than "toy tie-in," and fans can "expect an updated ***Micronauts***." Ironically, artist Kelley Jones was the penciller for some of the final issues of the ***Micronauts***, so he's certainly familiar with the task of making a toy tie-in popular with superhero fans.

Mr. Monster ©1988 Michael T. Gilbert

©1988 Scott Beaderstadt & Paul Fricke

DIGGER FITS THE BILL

They promised it months ago, and you've been clamoring for it: now it's ready! What is it? Why, it's **Scott Shaw!'s** and **Mark Evanier's** ***Digger Duckbill***, which will finally make its appearance in ***Usagi Yojimbo #13***, on sale in October from **Fantagraphics**. Of course, the book will also feature a **Usagi Yojimbo** lead story--in fact, it features the beginning of a new Usagi Yojimbo epic, so this is your chance to get in on the ground floor!

©1988 Scott Shaw! & Mark Evanier

AC OFFERS FEM FORCE PIN-UP BOOK

AC has established a reputation for itself as a publisher of "good girl" comics; you know, those comics that feature pulchritudinous female heroes in powerful and provocative poses as the pound on their opponents?

Well, in November, AC will feature those female heroes, ***Fem Force***, in a pin-up portfolio that will feature such artists as **Art Adams, Bill Willingham, Mike Mignola**, and others. The 44-page ***Fem Force Pin Up Portfolio Volume 2*** will be priced at $2.95.

GRINDBERG GRINDS OUT SIX ISSUES OF FIRESTORM

Tom Grindberg, well-known comics artist whose Neal Adams-ish style has graced an ***X-Factor Annual*** and the **Master of Kung Fu** series in ***Marvel Comics***, will be the guest illustrator for six issues of ***Firestorm the Nuclear Man beginning*** with #80. The series will be written by regular author **John Ostrander** and inked by **Sam De La Rosa**.

SPOTLIGHT ON DENYS COWAN

by Charles Rutledge & Cliff Biggers

***Denys Cowan** is one of the Eighties' hottest artists; his work in the field began when he was seventeen years old, but it is in the past five years that he has begun to develop a real following for his powerful, strongly-styled artwork. Denys has illustrated a number of features for a variety of comics companies, but the books that he is best known for are the books he has worked on most recently: **Black Panther**, a four-issue limited series from Marvel that came out earlier this year after sitting on hold for several years; **Dr. Zero**, one of Epic's Shadowline Saga series that Denys did the first four issues of; and, of course, **The Question**, DC's revitalized Charlton hero that Denys and Denny O'Neil have made their own. Denys took some time to talk to **CSN** at the Atlanta Fantasy Fair and again in San Diego.*

What are you working on right now?

I'm working on ***The Question, Dr. Zero***, and various other projects. There's going to be a new prestige-format thing with Denny O'Neil ; it will be a brand-new creation under DC's new creator-ownership policy/contract. I can't get into right now, but I'll let you know as soon as I can.

Tell us a little bit about the *Black Panther* series. I know it was delayed for a while, and I was wondering how complete it was before it was delayed.

It was delayed for five years. I had done three issues of the series five years ago; the first issue was about to go to press as I finished the third one when it got called back. Jim Shooter, who was editor in chief back then, told me that it looked like all the white people were killing the black people in the first issue, so that is why he might have decided to pull it back from the printer. It got put into various drawers after that, and I didn't finish it at that time.

It didn't make any sense to me to keep doing it then. He told me that they sold a lot of comics in South Africa , and that was why it was called off.

Last year, in San Diego, Mark Gruenwald and Peter Gillis were at the convention, and they asked me if I would be willing to pencil the fourth issue if they agreed to publish it. I said, "Of course, sure." I was certainly willing to finish it. It was the best work I had done up to that point during that period of time that I had worked at Marvel. I also thought that the subject matter was very important, and I wanted people to have a chance to read it. I thought a lot of people who might not ordinarily be aware of what was going on, a lot of kids, might get a chance to read the book and find out what was happening.

There are some new pages in the first issue of ***Black Panther***, some things I re-did, but most of the book is five years old. I was very pleased with a statement that ***Comic Shop News*** made in its review of the series; you said that ***Black Panther*** marked "a turning point in the development of the Cowan style," and I liked that. I'm glad that someone noticed that there **is** a Cowan style.

I was very pleased that all four issues of the ***Black Panther*** sold out from Marvel. All four issues sold out in a matter of days. I was right; people did want to read it!

How did you end up doing *Dr. Zero*?

I was going up to Marvel to discuss the ***Black Panther*** last year, and Archie Goodwin topped me in the elevator. He said, "I want to talk to you about something," so I dropped by his office. The whole **Shadowline Saga** was developed by Archie; he created the concepts of all the characters, then came to various artists and asked them if they'd work on it. He asked me if I would be willing to do one of the new Shadowline books, and I said sure. I was involved in the early stages of the book's design, and it was fun designing a character from scratch that way.

Above: A page from *Dr. Zero* #1 by Denys Cowan and Bill Sienkiewicz ©1988 Marvel Comics

I also wanted to expand my audience; I thought the Shadowline books might reach some people who weren't seeing my work on ***The Question***, so I decided to go for it.

I've only done the first four issues of ***Dr. Zero***, and then my schedule got so busy that I couldn't continue. I enjoyed the chance to work on the series and to help design the character, but I just had too many projects to do that many regular titles.

Bill Sienkiewicz wasn't originally scheduled to be my inker on ***Dr. Zero***; I had another inker, but it didn't work out. A friend of mine, Michael Davis--who, by the way, will be illustrating ***Etc.***, Piranha's first publication-- said, "Why don't you get Bill Sienkiewicz? He's doing the covers for ***The Question*** now, so he knows your work pretty well." It never occurred to me that he'd be even remotely interested in inking me on the book. Coincidentally, at the same time, the people at Marvel were thinking the same thing, so they asked him, and he did it.

Bill and I had always wanted to work together; we had collaborated on covers , and he had inked panels of mine when we shared a studio together, so we thought it'd be a gas to do a book together.

***The Question* is the book you're really known for. You've been doing it for two years now. How's it doing?**

Compared to a super mutant book, the sales aren't really that good. We get a lot of critical acclaim for the book--we got an Eisner nomination for the best art team, and we were voted number four in the top twenty comics in ***Amazing Heroes***. We won the ***CBG***'s "Best Direct Sales Comic," beating out 250 other books. The people who like the book are very intelligent, perceptive readers who know a good quality book when they read one, but there just aren't enough of them to make the book a top seller.

I think part of the problem is that the Question doesn't have a standard superhero costume; he kind of has a costume, and yet he doesn't. It's much closer to normal clothing except for the mask--and I don't think the superhero fans are sure how to take that.

The original Question wore a business suit and the mask all the time; I didn't think that would be very realistic. I started thinking about what I would wear if I were doing what the Question does, and that's what I had him wear. I would dress in something comfortable that I could move in--especially since he's a martial artist, also.

Basically, I dressed him in stuff that

SPOTLIGHT ON DENYS COWAN

I have, for the most part; these are clothes that are worn in the real world. He's a man who likes to look good.

Who influenced your artwork?

Joe Kubert, John Buscema, Hal Foster, Alex Raymond, all those classic guys influenced me. Sometimes it's hard to see it. I worked for Continuity for a while, as well. I was seventeen years old at the time, and I worked for Neal for a while, and learned from the experience.

I also like a lot of European artists. My influences, though, aren't just in comics. I am influenced by illustrators, filmmakers, fine artists, and music. I really like a lot of the modern comics artists, too; I like Frank Miller's writing, and I like Bill Sienkiewicz's material, and I really like Howard Chaykin's work, particularly his sense of design and draftsmanship..

The first time I ever saw the Question, it was in ***Bulls Eye*** magazine, by Alex Toth. Whenever I thought of the Question, I thought of that Alex Toth ***Bulls Eye*** story. It was beautiful; once I started doing the book, I wanted a copy of that Question story, but I couldn't find it anywhere. Someone out there heard that I wanted it, though, and sent a copy of it to Mike Gold at DC. Whoever you are, I thank you--please write me care of DC or ***CSN*** and say "I'm the person who sent it in." But it was Toth's Question that I remembered, not Steve Ditko's.

Some people have said that yours and Denny's Question isn't the same as Steve Ditko's Question; how do you feel about that?

They're right; I didn't use Ditko as much of an influence. But I've done over 700 pages of ***Question*** material so far, and Steve Ditko did only 64 or so pages. The way Denny is writing him is different from the way he used to be. I really think of ***The Question*** as our own character now.

EX-MUTANTS

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SPOTLIGHT ON DENYS COWAN

Thanks, Steve, for creating him, but I really like the way he is now.

I'm in the process of negotiating to do ***The Question*** for one more year; one of the reasons that I would like to do it for a third year is that it would give me a chance to work with Malcolm Jones III, who is one of the best inkers in the business. Right now, I'm thinking that three years will be about it for me. There's only so much I can do with the character, and I think I've will have done it by the end of the third year.

What else are you going to do?

Well, Marvel's talking about giving the ***Black Panther*** his own book, and they contacted me about doing that, but I think I've done all that I wanted to do with the ***Black Panther***. I enjoyed working on the mini-series, but I don't want to go back and do a monthly book. I have said I'd do the covers for the series, though, if they'd like me to..

I had a chance to draw Green Arrow in ***The Question*** and in ***The Question Annual***, and I had a good time with him. I didn't think that I would, but it turned out to be a lot of fun.

I know you're an avid Batman fan; do you have plans to do the character?

I really want to do Batman; in fact, I'm supposed to be doing a 144-page Batman story with Sam Hamm, the man who did the original screenplay for the ***Batman*** movie. I want to do Batman very, very much. It's a problem of scheduling, though; because of my commitments, I can only do a special project that will fit in around the other books that I am already scheduled to do.

I was supposed to do the ***Batman Annual*** with Mike Baron originally, but it didn't work out; again, it was a problem of scheduling.

How did you end up doing an issue of *Jon Sable*?

Well, that came about because First Comics really wanted me to do ***Jon Sable***. It didn't turn out as well as I would have liked, and I don't think I'll be doing any ***Jon Sable*** issues in the future, just due to professional differences.

At first, the people at First asked me to do ***Jon Sable*** forever, but I told them that I just didn't have the time to do it. I said, "Thank you very much, but I don't have the time." Then they asked me to do four issues, and I said I couldn't do that, either. Then they offered me a two-parter, and I had to turn it down. Finally, they asked me to just one issue, so I decided to give it a shot. I gave them a plot idea, and they gave it to Marv Wolfman, and we had a story. I got behind, though, due to illness, and things didn't go as well as I would have liked.

If you had a chance to do anything you wanted for Marvel or DC, what would you do?

Well, if Marvel would let me do whatever I wanted, it would be ***Deathlok***. I have some ideas for the character that I'd really like to use. At DC, I'd like to do ***Batman***. I'd really like to ***Batman***. Are you listening, guys?

The Question ©1988 DC Comics

THE THRILLS & LAUGHS START NEXT WEEK EXCLUSIVELY IN CSN!

Have you seen anything in this issue of ***Comic Shop News*** that you can't live without? Make sure you don't miss it; clip this handy coupon and write down the things that you want you comics shop owner to be sure to get for you!

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UPCOMING COMICS QUICKLIST

The Upcoming Comics listing of scheduled titles and the dates that they should arrive in comics shops across the country. That doesn't mean that the books will always be in your shop on the date listed: some publishers ship from different parts of the country, and the farther away the publisher is from your local comic shop, the longer it will take the books to get to you. Publishers are sometimes forced to reschedule titles, and that might result in some date changes on some releases. We update these whenever possible.

Each entry presents the title and number of the book, followed by the release date; if a title doesn't have a scheduled release date (some publishers merely say that their books will ship in September without giving a date), we don't give you a date. After that is the Publisher of the comic and the price. If a book you're looking for is on the index and doesn't arrive in a week or two after the date, be sure to ask the friendly folks at your comics shop; they may be able to update you on schedule changes that have affected that book.

Hang on to this list! It presents the titles that are supposed to ship during the next two weeks. Next week's *CSN* will feature a complete October checklist of everything due for the entire month.

- ❑ ***Action Comics Weekly 625*** 9/22 DC $1.50
- ❑ ***Action Comics Weekly 626*** 9/29 DC $1.50
  DC's weekly featuring Green Lantern, Superman Deadman, Shazam!, Black Canary, Secret Six, and more
- ❑ ***Adventures of Superman 448*** 9/29 DC .75
- ❑ ***Akira 4*** 9/29 Marvel $3.50
- ❑ ***Alf Digest 2*** 9/29 Marvel $1.50
- ❑ ***Amazing Heroes 150*** 9/29 Fantagraphics $2.95
- ❑ ***American Flagg! 9*** 9/22 First $1.95
- ❑ ***Animal-Man 5*** 9/29 DC $1.25
- ❑ ***Appleseed 1*** 9/22 Eclipse $2.50
- ❑ ***Area 88 32*** 9/22 Eclipse $1.50
- ❑ ***Avengers 299*** 9/22 Marvel $1
  Captain America begins to re-form the Avengers with an all-new lineup
- ❑ ***Barefoot Gen TPB 3*** New Society $8.95
  Superb Japanese manga translation featuring an autobiographical account of the bombing of Hiroshima and the aftereffects
- ❑ ***Betty's Diary 22*** 9/22 Archie .75
- ❑ ***Bullwinkle & Rocky 8*** 9/22 Marvel $1
- ❑ ***Classic X-Men 29*** 9/22 Marvel $1.25
- ❑ ***Conan Saga 20*** 9/29 Marvel $2
- ❑ ***Conan the Barbarian 214*** 9/22 Marvel $1
- ❑ ***Corum: The Bull & the Spear 1*** 9/29 First $1.95
  New adaptation of Moorcock fantasy series
- ❑ ***Count Duckula 2*** 9/29 Marvel $1
- ❑ ***Deadshot 3*** 9/22 DC $1
  Mini-series spinoff from Suicide Squad
- ❑ ***Dishman 1*** 9/22 Eclipse $2.50
- ❑ ***Disney Album 12*** 9/29 Gladstone $5.95
  Graphic album focusing on the relationship between Donald and Daisy
- ❑ ***Donald Duck 269*** 9/22 Gladstone .95
- ❑ ***Doom Patrol 16*** 9/29 DC $1
- ❑ ***Dr. Strange 2*** 9/29 Marvel $1.50
  Is Dr. Strange really trapped in the body of a rat? You bet!
- ❑ ***Dragon's Claws 5*** 9/29 Marvel $1.75
- ❑ ***Dragonlance 2*** 9/22 DC $1.25
- ❑ ***Duck Tales 3*** 9/29 Gladstone .95
- ❑ ***Elementals 29*** 9/22 Comico $1.75
- ❑ ***Fangoria 79*** 9/29 Starlog $3.50
- ❑ ***Fantastic Four 322*** 9/29 Marvel .75
  Inferno tie-in
- ❑ ***Flash Gordon 8*** 9/29 DC $1.25
- ❑ ***GI Joe 82*** 9/22 Marvel $1
- ❑ ***GI Joe TPB*** 9/29 Marvel $6.95
  *Reprinting early issues of **GI Joe Special Missions***
- ❑ ***GI Joe European Missions 5*** 9/29 Marvel $1.75
  All-new GI Joe European adventures
- ❑ ***Green Arrow 12*** 9/22 DC $1
  Continuing the sequel to Longbow Hunters
- ❑ ***Haywire 4*** 9/22 DC $1.25
- ❑ ***Hellblazer 13*** 9/22 DC $1.25
- ❑ ***Incal GN 3*** 9/29 Marvel $12.95
  Conclusion of Jodorowsky/Moebius sf adventure of detective Jean DiFool
- ❑ ***Incredible Hulk 351*** 9/22 Marvel .75
- ❑ ***Iron Man 238*** 9/29 Marvel .75
- ❑ ***Jonny Quest 28*** 9/22 Comico $1.75
- ❑ ***Justice 27*** 9/22 Marvel $1.50
- ❑ ***Kamui 33*** 9/29 Eclipse $1.50
- ❑ ***Legion of Super-Heroes 54*** 9/22 DC $1.75
  Levitz and Giffen unite on all-new Legion adventures
- ❑ ***Libby Ellis GN*** Eternity $7.95
  Reprinting last summer's miniseries
- ❑ ***Light & Darkness War 2*** 9/22 Marvel $1.95
- ❑ ***Marvel Age 70*** 9/22 Marvel .50
- ❑ ***Marvel Comics 11*** 9/22 Marvel $1.25
- ❑ ***Marvel Tales 219*** 9/22 Marvel .75
- ❑ ***Masterworks 4: Avengers*** 9/29 Marvel $29.95
  *Reprinting **Avengers 1-10***
- ❑ ***Mickey Mouse 244*** 9/22 Gladstone $2.95
  Mickey's 60th birthday commemmorative issue
- ❑ ***New Titans 51*** 9/29 DC $1.75
  George Perez Returns! Wolfman and Perez unite for new Titans adventures as the title is

If you enjoy reading *CSN*, don't thank us...

...Thank your retailer!

While you probably pay little or nothing for a new copy of ***Comic Shop News***, it isn't free. The friendly folks at the shop where you pick this up pays for those copies each week. They do this because they want you to know about what's happening in the comics scene today and nobody does that better than ***CSN***. So next time you pick up a copy of the newsletter, be sure to thank the retailer for carrying it; after all, you can't get a subscription to ***CSN***, it is available exclusively at comic speciality outlets, like the one you where you shop!

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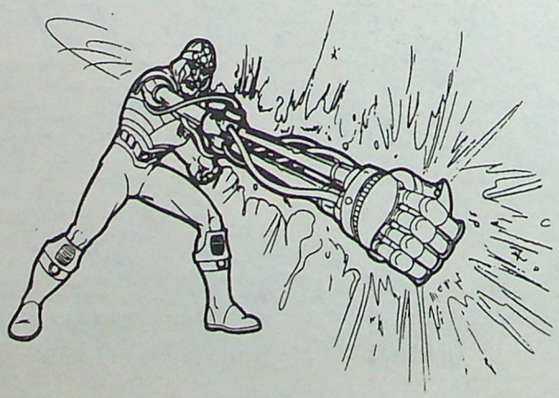

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UPCOMING COMICS QUICKLIST

changed to reflect the team's changing status
- ❑ ***New York Year Zero 3*** 9/22 Eclipse $2
- ❑ ***Next Nexus 1*** 9/22 First $1.95
  Who will become the new Nexus? Baron and Rude know!
- ❑ ***Russell's Illustrated Opera TPB*** 9/22 Eclipse $14.95
  Adaptations of Salome, Pelleas and Melisande, and Parsifal, fully painted

©1988 First Comics

- ❑ ***Plastic Man 1*** 9/22 DC $1
  The first stretchable hero returns, courtesy of Foglio and Barta
- ❑ ***Power Comics 4*** 9/29 Eclipse $2
- ❑ ***Power of the Atom 6*** 9/29 DC $1
- ❑ ***Powerpack 43*** 9/29 Marvel $1.50
- ❑ ***Prisoner 2*** 9/22 DC $3.50
  Askwith and Motter present the sequel to the cult favorite television series
- ❑ ***Punisher 15*** 9/22 Marvel $1
- ❑ ***Robotech Macross Saga 31*** 9/22 Comico $1.75
- ❑ ***Sable 11*** 9/29 First $1.95
- ❑ ***Scout: War Shaman 6*** 9/29 Eclipse $1.95
  Tim Truman's superb story and art highlight this series
- ❑ ***Secret Origins 34*** 9/22 DC $1.50
  Secret Origins of the Justice League continue
- ❑ ***Shadow 18*** 9/29 DC $1.75
- ❑ ***Silver Surfer 19*** 9/22 Marvel $1
- ❑ ***Spectacular Spider-man 146*** 9/29 Marvel $1
- ❑ ***Speedball 5*** 9/29 Marvel .75
- ❑ ***Starbrand 17*** 9/29 Marvel $1.50
- ❑ ***Starman 4*** 9/29 DC $1
- ❑ ***Sub-Mariner 3*** 9/22 Marvel $1.50
- ❑ ***Superman 25*** 9/22 DC .75
- ❑ ***Swamp Thing 80*** 9/29 DC $1.25
- ❑ ***Tailgunner Jo 5*** 9/22 DC $1.25
- ❑ ***Team Yankee 2*** 9/22 First $1.95
- ❑ ***Team Yankee 3*** 9/29 First $1.95
  David Drake and Rod Whigham adapt the bestselling novel in a weekly comics series
- ❑ ***The Nam 26*** 9/29 Marvel $1.50
- ❑ ***Thor 399*** 9/29 Marvel .75
- ❑ ***Transformers 48*** 9/29 Marvel $1
- ❑ ***Uncle Scrooge Adventures 11*** 9/29 Gladstone .95
- ❑ ***Unknown Soldier 1*** 9/29 DC $1.50
  New series in modern settings
- ❑ ***Warlord 133*** 9/29 DC $1.50
- ❑ ***Whisper 20*** 9/15 First $1.95
- ❑ ***X-Factor 36*** 9/29 Marvel $1
- ❑ ***X-Men 240*** 9/22 Marvel $1
- ❑ ***X-Terminators 4*** 9/29 Marvel $1
  The previous 4 books are all Inferno tie-ins
- ❑ ***Xenon 20*** 9/29 Eclipse $1.50

Complete October Checklist next week!

Megaton Man ©1988 Donald Simpson

Q. What's the **best** source for holiday **hot picks?**

A. The
1988 Comic Shop News
Christmas Special

From the editors of ***Comic Shop News*** comes the ***1988 CSN Christmas Special.*** This will be the biggest and best issue yet--a double sized special featuring all the latest and best gift ideas. We'll give you the best overview of all **graphic novels, deluxe items, hardcover collections, trade paperbacks, comic strip reprints, portfolios,** and all the other great holiday picks from **Marvel, DC, First, Starblaze, Eclipse, Dark Horse, Kitchen Sink, Father Tree Press, Comico, Eternity, NOW, Viz, NBM, Fantagraphics** and dozens of other publishers. The special will also feature a beautiful color cover by **Paul Chadwick** featuring **Concrete!** This is one issue of ***CSN*** every fan will want to get!

The ***1988 CSN Christmas Special*** will ship in early November, however, your retailer is ordering this special issue now. So, you should reserve your copy ***today!*** After all, Christmas comes but once a year!